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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 ISLAMABAD 007563

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SUBJECT: SIXTEENTH MEETING OF U.S.-AFGHANISTAN-PAKISTAN
TRIPARTITE COMMISSION

Classified By: Derived from DSCG 05-01, b.

11. (C) Summary: The Tripartite Commission (TPC) Met at GHQ in Rawalpindi April 19 -- the third Tripartite conducted at the four-star level and the second official visit to Pakistan by Afghanistan's Chief of the General Staff. Atmospherics were favorable, continuing a trend seen in earlier TPC meetings. Key outcomes included agreement to hold a counter-IED symposium in May at Bagram for Coalition, Afghan and Pakistani participants, agreement to post Afghan and Pakistani intelligence LNOs at CFC-A HQ, with the long-term goal of moving these intel LNOs to Bagram after a validation period, a personal invitation from the ANA G-2 for his Pakistani counterpart (DGMI) to visit him in Kabul, and a summary of the inaugural Afghan-Pakistani Confidence Building Seminar, held in March at the Marshall Center in Germany. All three sides briefed their roles and provided an update on Operation Mountain Lion. Pakistani and Afghan participants acknowledged the significance of the ANA participation in Exercise Inspired Gambit scheduled for 1-12 May. All sides expressed support for accepting NATO-ISAF as a full member of the Tripartite Commission and for expanding the Border Subcommittee to include the southern border region -- though on both issues, the Pakistanis indicated they need to work internally before the GOP can offer official concurrence. End Summary.

12. (U) Participants met in Rawalpindi on April 19, 2006 for the 16th Tripartite Commission (TPC) Plenary Session. The Pakistani and Afghan sides were led at the four star level by Vice Chief of Army Staff General Ahsan Hyat and ANA Chief of General Staff General Bismullah Khan respectively. CFC-A Commander Lt General Karl Eikenberry led the U.S. side. Others participating on the Pakistani side included Pakistan's Ambassador in Kabul Tariq Aziz Ud Din, Director General of Military Operations (DGMO) MG Muhammad Yousaf, Incoming DGMO MG Ahmed Shuja Pasha, Director General of Military Intelligence MG Nadeem Taj, Director of Military Operations BG Nasser Khan Janjua, and Director of Military Intelligence BG Raza Muhammad. The Afghan side included ANA Chief of Operations Lt Gen Sher Karimi, DG of the Afghan Border Police LG Haroon Asefi, Ambassador to Pakistan Nangulalai Tarzi and ANA Chief of Intelligence MG Abdul Khaliq. U.S. participants included MG Benjamin Freakley and BG James Terry. BG Richard Tabor represented NATO/ISAF.

13. (C) Atmospherics at the TPC were favorable, helped by a dinner the previous evening hosted by General Ahsan at his

residence. On the morning of the TPC, General Bismullah was received with full honors. During the meeting, both sides spoke repeatedly of "brotherly relations" and the need for trust and improved coordination at the operational level. General Ahsan opened the meeting by stressing that Pakistan remained committed to good relations with Afghanistan, adding that the two countries faced a common enemy opposed to peace in the region. General Bismullah expressed appreciation for Pakistan's efforts in the border regions and offered condolences for Pakistan Army "shahids" who had been killed in Waziristan. Underscoring that the two countries shared common interests in regional stability, he urged Pakistan to focus increased attention on border areas in the south, where Taliban and Al Qa'ida elements were infiltrating and destabilizing Afghanistan's southern provinces. Lt. General Eikenberry noted the shift of international operations toward NATO/ISAF, explaining that at the end of July MG Freakley would wear two hats as both as operational commander of Regional Command East and as Deputy Commander under NATO/ISAF.

Border Security Subcommittee

14. (C) BG Terry briefed on progress in the Border Security Subcommittee Meeting (BSSM), including improving communications capabilities connecting the two sides. A secure computer system now links CJTF-76 HQ and Pakistani counterparts, and a secure, high-frequency radio system expected to be delivered by early May will give Coalition units the ability to coordinate directly with Pakistani units on the other side of the border. BG Nasser observed that the frequency of border violations had declined and that all sides recognized the "sanctity of borders." He noted the

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killing in Afghanistan of seventeen Pakistanis and Afghan assurances that "necessary action" would be taken. Lt. General Eikenberry noted that as the BSSM expanded to cover Regional Command South it would confront a different configuration of deployments and threats. General Ahsan, while supportive in principle, said that this transition would require careful thought, given that in Pakistan's 12th Corps region (Balochistan) the geography and demographics were very different than in the 11th Corps region (the Tribal Areas). Given that the area was very sparsely populated, there would be an increased need for surveillance capability and mobility. "We need to get together and get deeper into it," he concluded.

Military Intelligence Sharing Working Group

15. (C) Following an update on the Military Intelligence Subcommittee, General Ahsan noted that there was a need for a deeper understanding of principles relating to intelligence, which should be "preventive, preemptive and predictive." The Afghan side stressed the need for better intelligence and communication on the recruitment and deployment of suicide bombers. The Pakistanis emphasized the need to deploy liaison officers quickly and the importance of tracking and blocking weapons trafficking, which was affecting law and order in Balochistan with direct implications for stability in bordering areas of Afghanistan. Lt. General Eikenberry noted that with respect to intelligence cooperation, other national agencies were also involved and it would be important to avoid redundancy. There was a tentative agreement to post Afghan and Pakistani intelligence LNOs at CFC-A HQ, with the long-term goal of moving these intel LNOs to Bagram after a validation period.

Counter IED Working Group

16. (C) After a presentation on the way ahead on counter-IED cooperation and a comparative assessment of counter IED capabilities, the Pakistani and Afghan sides commended

progress in the Working Group and agreed that IEDs represented a common threat. General Ahsan responded to an Afghan request for technical assistance by saying Pakistan, after suffering significant losses of its own, had developed safety measures and procedures that it would share. He also stressed the need to target the full IED supply chain, beginning with funding sources. A Counter-IED Symposium, jointly hosted by CFC-A and ARCENT, will be held at the end of May at Bagram, and attended by Coalition, Afghan and Pakistani participants.

Operation Mountain Lion

¶7. (C) Lt. General Karimi briefed on ANA and Coalition shaping and border operations, explaining that the ANA's 201st, 203rd and 205th Corps were participating in the operation with coalition forces. 201st Corps is participating as part of the Coalition main effort, with battalions conducting Joint Patrolling and Offensive Operations in Pech and Korengal Valleys; 203d Corps is conducting joint border operations in Khowst, Paktika and Zabol Provinces, and 205th Corps is conducting shaping operations in southern Afghanistan.

¶8. (C) BG Nasser reviewed Pakistani deployments in support of Operation Mountain Lion, including:

- Blocking positions established at 3 locations (Arandu, Chitral; Bin Shahi, Dir; Nawa Pass, Bajaur) -- to interdict key infiltration routes
- 133 Army and Frontier Corps posts in the area
- 7 Frontier Corps Wings already deployed to Chitral/Dir/Bajaur
- Additional units moved in to support Operation Mountain Lion, including:
 - 2 Army Infantry Battalions (one pulled from the earthquake area)
 - 3 FC Wings
 - 1 SOTF Company

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- 1 Medium Artillery Battalion
- 3 Mortar batteries
- SSG and Aviation support from Peshawar are also available as required
- a total of approximately 3000 personnel deployed

¶9. (C) BG Nasser also reviewed operations in the tribal areas since the last TPC on February 26:

- March 1: Nur Payo Khan (Sedgai), 45 enemy KIA; 46 enemy WIA
- March 4: Miram Shah and Mir Ali, 65-70 enemy KIA
- March 7: Miram Shah Operations to destroy militant madrassas and militants' buildings
- March 10: Khatti Kili (Sadiq Noor Compound), 25-30 enemy KIA
- April 4: Operation Mana, 40 enemy KIA; 19 apprehended
- April 12: Operation Naghar, 13 enemy KIA; (including HVT Abdul Rehman; 7 foreigners KIA)
- Total of 25 militant houses demolished during the time period.

Looking ahead, Nasser explained that "jeepable" tracks in the border area would be blocked, sweep operations and "snap" operations by SSG and SOTF would continue, Miram Shah and Mir Ali would remain a "weapons free declared" area and a night curfew would be imposed in border areas. Also, a political process would be implemented alongside military operations.

Confidence Building Seminars

¶10. (C) ANA J-2 Col. Salahuddin praised the recent joint Pakistan-Afghanistan seminar in Germany, saying that by the end of the session participants on both sides had overcome

suspensions and become friends. Pakistani LTC Dar, also a Garmisch participant, echoed Salahuddin's views on the confidence-building value of the seminars. CFC explained that two sessions would be held annually over the next five years, focusing on field grade officers and officers serving in the border regions.

Tripartite Way Ahead

¶11. (C) Summing up, Lt. General Eikenberry noted that key areas to address were structural issues relating to the next steps in the intelligence sharing working group and the expansion of the BSSM to the south (involving Pakistan's 12th Corps and Frontier Corp). He proposed that representatives from all sides meet in Pakistan to agree on modalities. He reassured the Pakistani side that the expansion of NATO/ISAF would not mean a diminution in U.S. capability; the U.S. would still provide the most "boots on the ground," contributing on intelligence and air support, among other areas. He expressed the hope that at the next Tripartite in June, NATO/ISAF could be brought in as a full partner. General Ahsan was agreeable in principle on the expansion of the BSSM to the South but indicated that Pakistan would have to vet this concept through the Joint Staff before final approval. On full NATO membership starting with the June Tripartite, Gen. Ahsan said this would "in all probability" occur, but would also require formal approval. General Ahsan voiced his satisfaction that the ANA would participate in the U.S.-Pakistan Exercise Inspired Gambit. General Bismullah Khan, invited Pakistani DGMO-designate MG Pasha to visit Afghanistan, emphasized the importance of trust in achieving common goals and again sought to draw Pakistan's attention to the southern border region.

¶12. (U) CFC-A Commander Lt General Karl Eikenberry cleared this cable.
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